

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 87-95 are currently pending. Claims 76-86 having been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, and Claims 87-95 having been added for consideration. The changes and additions to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification, for example, on page 111, line 7 to page 132, line 1; and Figures 22 and 23. Thus, no new matter has been added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 82 and 85 were objected to; Claims 76-86 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph; Claims 76-86 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; Claims 76, 79-83, 85, and 86 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iwata (U.S. Patent No. 6,778,289) in view of Delaney (U.S. Patent No. 6,831,754); Claims 77 and 78 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iwata and Delaney in view of Butterworth et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0133656, hereinafter “Butterworth”); and Claim 84 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iwata and Delaney in view of Azami (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0231345).

With respect to the objections to Claims 82 and 85, Applicant respectfully submits that the cancellation of Claims 82 and 85 render these grounds of objection moot.

With respect to the rejections of Claims 76-86 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement, Applicant respectfully submits, without any admission as to the propriety of the outstanding rejection, that the cancellation of Claims 76-86 render these grounds of rejection moot.

With respect to the rejections of Claims 76-86 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, Applicant respectfully submits, without any admission as to

the propriety of the outstanding rejection, that the cancellation of Claims 76-86 render these grounds of rejection moot.

With respect to the rejections of Claim 76-86 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), Applicant respectfully submits, without any admission as to the propriety of the outstanding rejection, that the cancellation of Claims 76-86 render these grounds of rejection moot.

New Claim 87 recites, *inter alia*:

a communication unit configured to communicate with the other image forming apparatus connected via a network;

a document storage unit configured to store the second image data or the second document;

a printing unit configured to print the first image data or the first document received from the other image forming apparatus via the communication unit; and

a document management unit configured to, when the image forming apparatus is serving as the document destination apparatus, transmit a print request to the other image forming apparatus, for receiving the first image data or the first document stored in the other image forming apparatus, and to print the received first image data or the first document by the print unit, and the document management unit being further configured to, when the image forming apparatus is serving as the document source apparatus, transmit the second image data or the second document in response to receipt of a print request from the other image forming apparatus, for printing the second image data or the second document stored in the image forming apparatus, by a printing unit of the other image forming apparatus.

Applicant submits that Delaney fails to disclose or suggest at least these features of Claim 87.

Delaney describes a method for sending digital images to a recipient using a sender printer including the steps of a printer receiving a digital camera memory card and sending an image stored within the memory card to a recipient across a network such that a hard copy of the sent image is automatically printed by a recipient device. (See Delaney, Abstract). In particular, Delaney shows, in Figure 4, the method including inserting a memory card into a

memory card slot 18 of a printer 16 (304), a user designating an image to be sent to one or more recipients (306), the user selecting the intended recipients of the images (308), sending the various image files to the recipients (310), the appropriate recipient device 22 receiving the image (312), and the image being automatically printed (314). (See Delaney, column 4, line 16 to column 5, line 9; and Figure 4).

However, Delaney merely describes that the user of the printer 16 selects an image and a destination device 22, the image is sent to the recipient device 22, and the image is automatically printed out at the recipient device 22.

Delaney does not describe that when the printer 16 (i.e., as the image forming apparatus) is serving as a document destination, the printer 16 ***transmits a print request to the device 22*** (i.e., as the other image forming apparatus) ***for receiving image data or a document stored in the device 22*** (i.e., as the other image forming apparatus) and prints the received image data or the document from the device 22 (i.e., as the other image forming apparatus); and that when the printer 16 (i.e., as the image forming apparatus) is serving as a document source, ***the printer 16 transmits second image data or a second document stored therein in response to receipt of a print request from the device 22*** (i.e., as the other image forming apparatus), for printing the second image data or the second document stored in the printer 16 (i.e., as the image forming apparatus), by a printing unit of the device 22 (i.e., as the other image forming apparatus).

Therefore, Delaney does not disclose or suggest “a communication unit configured to communicate with the other image forming apparatus connected via a network; a document storage unit configured to store the second image data or the second document; a printing unit configured to print the first image data or the first document received from the other image forming apparatus via the communication unit; and a document management unit configured to, when the image forming apparatus is serving as the document destination apparatus,

transmit a print request to the other image forming apparatus, for receiving the first image data or the first document stored in the other image forming apparatus, and to print the received first image data or the first document by the print unit, and the document management unit being further configured to, when the image forming apparatus is serving as the document source apparatus, transmit the second image data or the second document in response to receipt of a print request from the other image forming apparatus, for printing the second image data or the second document stored in the image forming apparatus, by a printing unit of the other image forming apparatus,” as recited in Claim 87.

In view of these considerations, it is respectfully submitted that Delaney fails to disclose or suggest or make obvious the pending claims. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection based on Delaney is respectfully requested for at least these reasons.

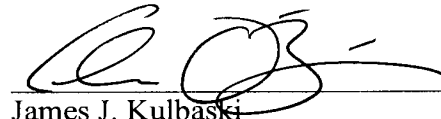
Iwata, Butterworth, and Azami have been considered but fail to remedy the deficiencies of Delaney with regard to Claim 87. Therefore, Applicant submits that independent Claim 87 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably distinguishes over Delaney, Iwata, Butterworth, and Azami, either alone or in proper combination.

Additionally, although differing at least in scope, independent Claim 95 patentably distinguishes over Delaney, Iwata, Butterworth, and Azami for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 87.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James J. Kulbaski', is written over a horizontal line.

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